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upon an archaic political and social organization, which was characterized by thrift, obedience, and industry, was able to secure a large surplus. In England this surplus was being wasted in sport and what Mr. Veblen calls "conspicuous waste," namely useless and luxurious expenditure. In Germany, where a parasitic leisure class had not had time to develop, the ambitions of the ruling classes were able to divert this surplus into war expenditure. This is one reason why Germany has been able to afford the expensive luxury of militarism; she has spent on preparedness what she might have spent on sport.

In order to carry out this military purpose the economic system of the country has been controlled at every point. The railway system, shipping, and especially tariff legislation have been used to make Germany self-sufficient, and to maximize her fighting capacity. The mercantilistic trade policy has had a considerable share in provoking antagonism between Germany and her neighbors. In a final chapter on the net gain from such a policy Mr. Veblen concludes that it has resulted rather in a net loss to the average German citizen; the gain, if any, belongs to the ruling dynasty.

It is impossible in a brief review to convey an adequate notion even of the main thesis of the book; and no reference can be made to the many incisive criticisms and keen analyses of the present industrial régime. The book is broader than its title. As an economic interpretation of German imperialism it is unique and timely. Those familiar with the author's former works will wish to read it for its own sake.

E. L. BOGART

*Christopher Columbus.* By Mildred Stapley. [True stories of great Americans.] (New York: Macmillan company, 1915. 240 p. \$50)

Having begun her preface with a very brief survey of the critical studies dealing with the life and work of Christopher Columbus which have been made within the last thirty years, the author states the object of the present volume. "Of all this learned and painstaking investigation very little has appeared in English." Necessarily, then, the conceptions of Columbus which are commonly held are incorrect, and even fantastic. The current books look upon the great discoverer as one who alone in the world "had scientific wisdom, that he had formed a theory of sailing west in order to reach India; and that, in his search for India in 1492, he accidentally came upon the outlying islands of North America." "It is to show how erroneous and inconsistent this old legend is, and properly and sympathetically to relate Columbus to his period and its influences, that the present story is offered to young Americans."

The author disclaims any attempt to set forth anything not already

known and recognized by students of the subject, but in the short space of 240 pages she interestingly relates in compact form the gripping story of "one of the greatest products of the Renaissance." She sets herself the laudable task of bringing to her readers that which she regards as nearest the truth concerning a great man. Form, then, rather than original research is the special object of the book.

The opening chapter strikes the dominant note of the whole treatment. The long years of anxious waiting, the disappointments which come to the man, his weaknesses, his perseverance and strength, finally rewarded by success, the dramatic setting of the triumphal entry of Ferdinand and Isabella into the conquered Granada offering at last his long sought opportunity; all are graphically depicted. Having thus auspiciously introduced her hero, the author picks up the thread of the story at its beginning. The childhood and youth of Columbus are first discussed; much of this must still be mere conjecture. Then comes his apprenticeship, when he accumulates a practical knowledge of the sea which later stands him in good stead. Through these earlier years there come to his ears the strange and stirring tales of unknown lands toward the west. All this time Columbus is improving himself by self-education, till presently there begins to develop the "big idea." With this ambition crystallized into one dominating thought, the man goes in search of aid, only to meet with discouraging opposition. But finally the desired assistance is given him. Then follow the four American voyages of discovery, the partial success, the ultimate disappointment, humiliation, and death.

Accepting the "pilot's story" interpretation with its necessary conclusion that Columbus did not seek the Indies by a western route, but new lands to the west of which the dying pilot told him during his sojourn in the Madeiras, the author quite successfully combines critical understanding with an attractive style. Historical background throughout renders the treatment especially enlightening. Christopher Columbus is a part of and not apart from his age. But for the unfortunate slip of finding it necessary to go into a discussion of "Italian civilization, in the middle sixteenth century," for the purpose of investigating the nature of the discoverer's childhood, and the forces that moulded his character, it can be said that a real contribution has been made. That contribution is no less than a successful harmonizing of truth with the limitations set by a youthful audience.

JACOB A. HOFFO